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| **cid:image001.jpg@01D5D9D9.F7D17E50**  **Dear Member,**  Further to the recent incidents of **pneumonia**, originating in **Wuhan, China**, and caused by [Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019), we would like to provide you more information on this public health situation:  **Background:**   * **On 31 December 2019**, The World Health Organization (WHO) was alerted to several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan City, China. The virus **did not match any other known virus**. This raised concern because when a virus is new, we do not know how it affects people. * One week later, **on 7 January**, Chinese authorities confirmed that they had identified a **new virus**. The new virus is a **coronavirus**, which is a family of viruses that include the common cold, and viruses such as SARS and MERS. This new virus was **temporarily named “2019-nCoV.”** * The WHO has been working with **Chinese authorities and global experts**, to learn more about the virus, how it affects the people who are sick with it, how they can be treated, and what countries can do to respond. * On **Thursday 30 January**, the WHO has declared the outbreak as a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern** (PHEIC).   **What are the Symptoms?**  Reported illnesses have ranged from people being **mildly sick to people being severely ill and dying**. Symptoms can include:   * Fever * Cough * Shortness of breath   The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) believes at this time that symptoms of 2019-nCoV may appear in **as few as 2 days** or as long as **14 days, after exposure**.  **Is the virus being transmitted from one person to another?**  **Yes.** Early on, many of the patients in the outbreak of respiratory illness caused by 2019-nCov in Wuhan, China had some link to a **large seafood and live animal market,** suggesting animal-to-person spread.  Later, a growing number of patients reportedly did not have exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread. [Chinese officials](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html) **report that sustained person-to-person spread in the community is occurring in China**. Human-to-human transmission has also been confirmed in the [United States](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/30/cdc-confirms-first-human-to-human-transmission-of-coronavirus-in-us.html), becoming at least the fifth country where the infection is now spreading through human-to-human contact.  **Coronavirus 2019-nCoV Cases Globally:**  The virus has been detected in humans across **multiple countries** – please [click here](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html) for the updated full list.  **What should I do to prevent it?**   * It is recommended to postpone or avoid travels to places that are known to have cases of coronavirus; The [CDC expanded an earlier travel warning](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china) advising to **avoid all non-essential travel to China**. * Avoiding close **contact** **with people** **suffering from acute respiratory** infections; * **Frequent hand-washing**, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment; * Avoiding close contact with **live or dead farm or wild animals**; * Travelers with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should **practice cough etiquette** (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and wash hands); * If you have traveled to the **affected areas**, **see a doctor and don’t come to work** if you show symptoms of the infection.   If you have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and **share previous travel history with your health care provider**;  For more information, please:   * [**Watch This Video**](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)   **And visit:**  WHO – nCoV page - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>  CDC – nCoV - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html> | | | | |
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